

MAJOR JOINT ACTIVITIES LOCATED AT MACDILL AFB, FLORIDA

UNITED STATES READINESS COMMAND



JOINT DEPLOYMENT AGENCY



UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND



WHAT IS IT?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of six US unified commands. The others are for Europe, Atlantic, Pacific, Central/South America and the Central Area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A transportation management agency operating as an extension of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of six US unified commands. Its area of responsibility includes 19 countries in Southwest Asia, the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa, plus the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. |
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WHAT DOES IT DO?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commands US-based general purpose Army and Air Force forces. - Provides US-based combat forces to overseas combat commands. - Develops operational concepts, tactics, techniques and procedures for joint operations of US forces. - Trains US-based forces during joint exercises. - Provides planning and commands forces for land defense of the US and, with Canadian Forces Mobile Command, land defense of Canada. - Provides military forces to assist civil defense of US. - Provides forces and a Joint Task Force Headquarters to conduct planning and operations, disaster relief and noncombatant evacuation as directed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides centralized management and coordination for worldwide deployment of US forces. - Provides deployment planning support for all unified commanders and joint task force commanders. - Plans, coordinates and monitors worldwide air, sea and land movement of US forces and materiel during military operations and exercises. - Develops a worldwide automated management information system for military deployments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deters aggression through military preparedness and provides the military dimension to US foreign policy in its area of responsibility. - Plans and, if directed, conducts combat operations to assist friendly nations. - Trains US and foreign forces in exercises, both in the US and overseas. - Establishes military relationships where required and furnishes representation, advice and assistance to US diplomatic missions. - Plans and conducts evacuation of noncombatant personnel, disaster relief and other humanitarian missions. - Administers the Security Assistance Program in the Central area (in transition until October 1983). |
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WHAT DOES IT COMMAND?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 364-person headquarters. - 325,000 US-based Army and Air Force personnel forming the general reserve of US combat ready forces. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not a command. A 181-person agency headquarters plus 129 persons shared from US Readiness Command. - No forces. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In peacetime:

A four-Service, 867-person headquarters with Army, Navy and Air Force component commands.

US military forces in Central area. - In wartime (major combat elements):

3 Divisions and other Army forces
1 and 1/3 USMC Marine Amphibious Force (1 and 1/3 Div)
18 Air Force Tactical Fighter Squadrons
3 Carrier Battle Groups and other naval forces |
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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE



STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROBERT C. KINGSTON, U.S. ARMY
COMMANDER IN CHIEF, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND
BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON THE
STATUS OF THE UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
FEBRUARY 23, 1984

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Headquarters, United States Central Command

LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROBERT C. KINGSTON

UNITED STATES ARMY

Robert Charles Kingston was born in Brookline, Massachusetts on 16 July 1928. He entered the US Army as an enlisted man in November 1948. The following year he attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Riley, Kansas, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant of infantry on 20 December 1949.

Between 1950 and 1954, General Kingston served as platoon leader, company executive officer, and company commander in the 3d Battalion, 32d Infantry in Korea. During his second tour in Korea, he was the Commanding Officer, Far East Command Special Mission Group.

In 1954 and 1955, General Kingston served as Executive Officer, Ranger Mountain Camp, Dahlonega, Georgia. From 1956 to 1959, he served as an Airborne Infantry Company Commander and as the Assistant Division G2 in the 82d Airborne Division. In 1960, General Kingston completed the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In 1960 and 1961, he served as the Exchange Airborne Officer with the 16th Independent Parachute Group, United Kingdom. During that tour, he commanded C Company, 3d Parachute (Battalion) for nine months.

In August 1961, General Kingston was assigned to the Operations Division, Headquarters, US Army, Europe. In June 1963, he was reassigned to the United States to the Test and Evaluation Group, United States Army Airmobile Test Unit, Fort Benning, Georgia. He attended the University of Omaha in 1965 where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in General Education; the same year he entered the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Virginia, graduating in January 1966. He was next assigned as the senior advisor to the Vietnamese Ranger Command. Later, on the same tour, for nine months he commanded the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division. Following this command assignment he served in the Studies and Observation Group, Headquarters, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, from March 1967 to September 1967.

(Current as of Sep 83)

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Cross
Distinguished Service Medal
Silver Star with first Oak Leaf Cluster
Legion of Merit with three Oak Leaf Clusters
Distinguished Flying Cross
Bronze Star with Valor Device and one Oak Leaf Cluster
Air Medal with 36 Oak Leaf Clusters
Joint Service Commendation Medal
Army Commendation Medal with first Oak Leaf Cluster
Army of Occupation Medal (Japan)
National Defense Service Medal with first Oak Leaf Cluster
Korean Service Medal with nine Battle Stars
Vietnam Service Medal with seven Battle Stars
NCO Professional Development Ribbon
Army Service Ribbon
Overseas Ribbon with Numeral 2
Order of National Security Merit, Chonsu
National Order of Vietnam (Fourth Class)
National Order of Vietnam (Fifth Class)
Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm (Individual) (Six Awards)
Vietnamese Honor Medal (First Class)
United Nations Service Medal
United Nations Medal
US Presidential Unit Citation
US Navy Presidential Unit Citation
Valorous Unit Award
Meritorious Unit Commendation
Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation
Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross (Unit Citation)
Republic of Vietnam Civil Actions Unit Citation
Combat Infantryman Badge (Second Award)
Master Parachutist Badge, US
Ranger Tab
Gliderman Badge
Korean Parachutist Badge
Parachute Wing, United Kingdom
Cambodian Parachutist Badge
Vietnamese Jumpmaster Badge
Vietnamese Ranger Badge
12 Overseas Bars

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Statement of

Lieutenant General Robert C. Kingston, US Army
Commander in Chief, United States Central Command
Before the Senate Armed Services Committee

February 23, 1984

Mr. Chairman and members of this Committee; in March 1983, three months after we became a Unified Command, I had the privilege of testifying before Senator Cohen and your Sea Power and Force Projection Subcommittee on the subject of "United States Central Command." As my Command enters its fifteenth month, I appreciate this opportunity to address the entire Senate Armed Services Committee on the current "Status of USCENTCOM." I am mindful of the Senate Armed Services Committee's efforts in getting my new Command off to a good start and, for that, I take this opportunity to offer my personal and official gratitude.

Before I tell you what we have accomplished, and where we are headed, let me quickly review the rationale for our establishment and our mission. The United States Central Command evolved over a period of about three years from the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, a command that was created in March 1980 as a temporary solution to a long-term problem. Former President

Carter, President Reagan, and Secretary Weinberger saw clearly that the United States' long-term needs in the vital Central area required something more permanent than a temporary joint task force. It needed a permanent command, a command with military responsibility for the area, as well as a security assistance role.

The establishment of the US Central Command provides a single US command with the responsibility for all US military activity in the region. This responsibility includes military planning, joint exercises involving US and regional forces, operational command of US forces in the theater, and security assistance. The objective of these activities is to assist regional states in strengthening their stability and maintaining their territorial integrity by improving indigenous defense capabilities.

USCENTCOM has assumed responsibility for virtually all US military activity in the nineteen nations that comprise my area of responsibility (see enclosure 1). This assigned area is larger than the continental United States. Within this area there are vast differences in national wealth, innumerable historical disputes, and cultural, religious and linguistic variances.

This region of the world is the historic land-bridge for trade between Europe and the East, represents the crossroads for US and

Western commerce, and is the largest single source of oil for the Western industrial economies. For example, estimates of proven crude reserves indicate the Persian Gulf region contains more than 54 percent of the world's proven crude reserves. This reserve is more than 60 percent of the noncommunist world's total proven reserves.

Today, the region is buffeted on all sides by extra regional conflicts and by internal regional strife that threatens to spill over in the region. An example is the Iran-Iraq War, which has siphoned funds badly needed for national development projects within some regional states, or that would be available for loan to other countries. Arab nation sympathies are divided and the rifts between the moderate and radical states have deepened. The war has coalesced the regional nations' mutual security concerns, particularly as pertains to freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf and security of oil production facilities. An aggressive Iran turns the heads of other regional states from overt Soviet activities. Internal conflicts impact on Egypt and Sudan, who are concerned with events in Chad manifested by their fear that Libyan operations against the region could be mounted through Chad. Further, Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia have problems which are of concern to the countries of the region. These countries have significant dissident movements that are, in varying degrees, externally supported. These movements threaten to spill over and involve other countries of the area.

In a more direct role, in December 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan to sustain a communist regime. The Soviets control the major cities and are working to win through the attrition of the Afghan freedom fighters, the Mujahideen, and by indoctrinating a new generation of Afghans to accept life under communism. The Soviets are using Afghanistan to extend their own zone of security, and as a potential staging area for power projection to the south. Operating from southern Russia and Afghanistan, Soviet forces could conduct a ground assault on Iran; to either seize the oil fields or secure their long standing goal of a warm water port.

Clearly, the most dangerous potential threat to the area is the Soviet Union. The Soviets have increased both their indirect and direct capabilities to extend their global presence and apply pressure to local regimes. Indirectly, they use extensive military grants and sales, military advisors, internal security personnel and even combat forces provided by proxies such as Cuba (see enclosure 2). Their direct capabilities include their ability to project power into the region with the recent modernization of their ground and air forces in the Transcaucas and Turkistan military districts, just north of my area. We must also seek to deny the Soviet Union or its surrogates, domination or hegemony in Africa.

In this volatile environment, our allies and friends look to the

United States as a force for stability and for protection of our mutual interests. The principal mission of USCENTCOM is deterrence. We do so by having manpower and material resources from all four Services in a high state of readiness and the national resolve to use them if required. As an example of our assistance to countries in the area, USCENTCOM was involved in a real-world contingency requiring a quick response to a potentially serious threat. The AWACS aircraft sent to Egypt in February 1983, to protect Sudan from a Libyan supported coup, was in response to a plea from a friend in need. The US response helped deter the attempted overthrow of a friendly government.

Should diplomacy, security assistance, and self-defense efforts all be insufficient to deter hostile forces, USCENTCOM must be prepared to deploy forces when requested and if so directed by the National Command Authorities. The development of plans is essential in preparing to use military force. We have an extensive planning effort which has provided a thorough look at the region and has focused on anticipating possible threats. This broader range of planning has enhanced our ability to respond to likely events and conflicts in the region.

Another way my Command prepares for operations is through exercises which allows us to train and employ forces from all four Services. Our exercises provide the means to: evaluate joint concepts; practice joint operations; operate forces in the

environment where they could be called upon to fight; and also work on our command and control procedures. Since 1 January 1983, USCENTCOM has sponsored two major exercises: GALLANT KNIGHT 83 and BRIGHT STAR 83.

GALLANT KNIGHT 83 was the fourth exercise in the GALLANT KNIGHT series and was an employment Command Post Exercise (CPX) conducted at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; the Naval Ocean Systems Center (NOSC) in San Diego, California; and at Camp Pendleton, California. USCENTCOM focused on specific objectives in the general areas of simulated joint operations, sustainment, special operations and communications. GALLANT KNIGHT 83 was successful in accomplishing the main purpose of exercising HQ USCENTCOM, its components and supporting commands in the procedural and coordination aspects of employment operations. Exercise objectives tested, resulted in a great deal of meaningful data for additional insight into command and control and procedural improvements.

BRIGHT STAR 83 exercise saw forces deployed to Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Oman under the command and control of HQ USCENTCOM. US Army Forces Central Command (USARCENT), US Central Command Air Forces (USCENTAF), US Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Forces Central Command (USJUWTFCENT) and supporting naval forces participated and conducted training and exercises. USCENTAF deployed fighter and AWACS elements. USARCENT deployed

mechanized units, an airborne unit and an air defense artillery team. Supporting naval forces conducted amphibious operations and contributed carrier-based air for joint/combined operations. USJWTFCENT conducted exercises and training in several countries. This was a successful field training exercise for all concerned. A total of 26,500 US personnel participated, (18,000 Navy, 2,200 Marines, and 5,800 USCENTCOM, Army and Air Force component forces). Combined operations proficiency was improved in all areas - land, sea, air, and special forces - for both host nation and US forces.

Exercises conducted in my area of responsibility (AOR), such as the BRIGHT STAR series, are vitally important as they afford selected forces the only opportunity to actually operate and train in the type environment in which they could be called upon to fight. They also contribute significantly to improving the strategic posture of the US in our AOR. These exercises, for example, are especially useful for:

- Establishing US credibility with both friends and potential adversaries.
- Providing interface between US and host nation military personnel.
- Conducting combined operations with host nation military personnel.
- Exercising the rapid deployment of component forces.

- Testing critical communications equipment and procedures in the AOR.
- Familiarizing selected personnel and units with environmental and operational characteristics of the AOR.

As the only unified command having limited deployed forces or equipment with which to exercise, and whose AOR is most remote from the continental United States, USCENTCOM-scheduled exercises in the AOR are, by necessity, expensive. In return, our exercise program has provided valuable inroads to the military and political leadership of friendly countries within the AOR. Your continued support is requested for adequately funding the JCS exercise program.

Another means of establishing credibility with the region has been the effort we have made to establish, strengthen and extend interpersonal relationships throughout the AOR. My visits to the area were more extensive and productive than anticipated one year ago. I made several visits to Oman, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya and Bahrain. Trips were also made to London, Rome and Brussels to brief our allies in the North Atlantic Council; followed by a visit to Yemen Arab Republic as a member of the US delegation to YAR National Day ceremonies. In May, I spent five days in Jordan, had an audience with King Hussein, and spent another five days in Saudi Arabia in December. The hospitality was exceedingly warm; I was given tours of most major military

installations and met with senior government and military officials. I believe the personal relationships we have established have helped the Command and, therefore, the United States Government gained the confidence of our friends in the region. Access, combined exercises, joint planning, and all that we desire as a matter of course in our relationship with the countries of the region, are dependent on the atmosphere of trust and confidence that is facilitated by personal relationships. I intend to continue to seek every opportunity for personal visits into the region; to send my senior staffers out at the appropriate occasions; and to encourage exchange visits to my headquarters at MacDill by regional political and military leaders.

The Command recognized long ago that our first means of deterrence is to have friends in the area that are able to defend themselves. The effectiveness of our total security assistance and training programs is therefore the best hope for achieving our long-term goals. We have security assistance programs in 14 of my 19 countries. These programs reflect a combination of host nation requirements and capabilities. These ongoing programs, which are the responsibility of the State Department and supported by my Command, will assist in achieving both national and regional security interests against a range of threats while supporting a strategy of deterrence.

Effectiveness must be measured psychologically as well as materially. Our programs must address the reality that the concerns of the nineteen nations of our region are as diverse as the topographical and cultural differences we handily recognize. Deterrence depends on credible military power; the right weapons systems in trained hands; in place and functioning command and control mechanisms; and realistic strategies that cover the spectrum of peace, crisis, and war. The perspectives of our friends in the region must be considered as we design, approve, and implement our security assistance programs. For example, the current threat against the Persian Gulf area is not singular, but plural in the eyes of the Gulf Cooperation Council states. They are concerned with far more than possible Soviet encroachment. To be effective, our security assistance must be relevant, timely, and keyed to needs of the countries within our AOR as well as US national security policy.

Other areas of accomplishment, which have improved my capabilities, include intelligence, military construction, pre-positioning and establishment of the Forward Headquarters Element (FHE).

In 1980, we began our efforts to develop an intelligence capability for the Command and its component forces. Recognizing the impact of a lack of presence in our area of responsibility on our ability to acquire and disseminate intelligence, we

identified requirements to the Department of Defense for intelligence-related automated support, communications and other functional intelligence support. As a result of our earlier efforts, initial intelligence Automated Data Processing and communications capabilities were in place at my headquarters in Florida by 1983. These initial systems, which will ultimately provide support during all phases of command operations from in-garrison through employment phases, have been tested in several field exercises with good results. Although providing initial progress toward resolving our intelligence shortfalls, we require additional essential capabilities in these areas, as well as other intelligence-related functional areas; such as, Human, Imagery and Signals Intelligence. In spite of the progress we've made over the past few years, continued congressional support for funding and acquisition of additional manpower and equipment is essential to insure that I will have the capability to employ my forces based on sound, accurate and timely intelligence.

Other initiatives that have been taken include construction of new facilities in Kenya, Somalia and Oman, funded by the Air Force and Navy MILCON programs. Already, elements of USCENTCOM are periodically using these facilities, increasing our capabilities in the region, enabling us to achieve some of our near-term operational and logistical goals.

It is important to emphasize that we are not creating new US

bases in the region. Rather, we are improving existing host nation facilities that we will be able to use to support US forces when needed.

Pre-positioning of support items has moved ahead particularly for water supply support equipment, munitions and POL storage. To alleviate overcrowding and improve security at Diego Garcia, two POL tankers and one breakbulk ship were relocated to WESTPAC ports. The Army's Rapid Deployable Medical Facility was replaced by four 200 bed, Marine Corps hospital companies. Three ports in WESTPAC were surveyed and found suitable for alternate maintenance sites for the Near-Term Pre-positioning Force (NTPF). Additionally, other improvements include placing the first operational 150,000 gallon per day reverse osmosis water purification unit on board a LASH barge unit with the NTPF, as well as other state of the art, but smaller water purification units ready for deployment.

Plans are under way to replace two Army breakbulk ships with a LASH ship this year, which will enhance our access to pre-positioned ammunition for the purposes of inspection, maintenances and issue. It will not only provide better ammunition support, but will do so at reduced costs.

The Air Force's plans for construction of facilities for ammunition storage in the AOR is also on track. With some

facilities complete and others on schedule, the capability to store ammunition in the area should provide great improvements to our rapid deployment and sustainment capabilities.

For every ten thousand short tons of equipment and material that we pre-position forward, on ships or ashore, another 500 C-141 sorties are available to move additional forces and equipment. For example, the dry cargo alone aboard the NTPF ships at Diego Garcia equates to 125,000 short tons, and represents 6,400 C-141 sorties.

Like other US unified commands, I require a presence in my area of responsibility as a practical necessity for the administration and coordination of activities for which I am responsible. A step was taken toward achieving that goal in December, 1983, when I established a small Forward Headquarters Element (FHE) afloat with the United States Middle East Force in the Persian Gulf. The main function of the FHE is to provide liaison with host governments, American embassies, and US military elements in the region. I believe we need a USCENTCOM forward presence ashore to fully integrate US military programs with diplomatic and economic programs in the region.

Mr. Chairman, there are several additional areas where the US Central Command needs help. These areas are air and sea lift, command, control, communications and computers, security

assistance, Special Operations forces and Chemical Warfare readiness.

My area of responsibility is over 7,000 miles from the east coast of the United States - a 14 hour trip in an air-refueled C-5 aircraft. The sea line of communication around the Cape of Good Hope is 12,000 miles; almost half the circumference of the earth. Improved lift will benefit not only my Command but the entire nation, for this is a national problem, not just a US Central Command problem.

We have a need for increased strategic lift capability because of the time critical requirement for moving a credible deterrent force once the decision has been made to deploy.

When considering lift, the problems are twofold: how to get what is needed to the theater -- and, once there, how to transport it to the user. The lack of airlift, sealift, railroads, ports and highway facilities in the region makes the mobility equation difficult to solve. For example, my entire area has just two-thirds of the paved road mileage found in the state of Florida. But, efforts are under way that should enhance our ability to deploy. For example, procurement of KC-10 tanker aircraft provides an enhanced inflight refueling system that significantly improves the overall capability of the Strategic Air Command tanker fleet. The KC-10 can refuel Air Force, Navy and Marine

aircraft alike, and the upper deck is available for cargo and passengers.

This program, plus the projected procurement of 50 additional C-5 and 44 additional KC-10 aircraft, will bring us closer to achieving the nation's airlift requirement by 1989. In addition to these programs, a requirement exists for a C-17 type aircraft that will close the gap for the outsized, bulk cargo lift shortfall. Also, the Civil Reserve Air Fleet provides us a contingency capability to call on civilian air carriers to assist in time of crisis.

For sealift, the Civilian Crewed Auxiliary Vehicle Cargo (TAKR), the Maritime Pre-positioning Ship (MPS), the Auxiliary Crane Ship (TACS), and the Auxiliary Lighterage Ship (TALS), are significant enhancement programs. The TAKR program provides for the conversion of eight SL-7 (sealand) class container ships to roll-on/roll-off and container capable vessels. These fast logistic ships will greatly shorten transit time to the region. The MPS program will pre-position the unit equipment of three Marine Amphibious Brigades aboard fast multi-purpose ships. The ships will be environmentally controlled and possess on-board vehicle maintenance capability. Of the 13 ships programmed, 5 will be new construction and 8 will be converted vessels. The TACS program will convert President Polk class container ships into vessels with large mobile cranes capable of off-loading nonself-

sustaining container ships moored along side.

Communications is another key element in any military operation. I have a need to establish and maintain communications to the National Command Authorities, to connect with my forward deployed forces, and to command and control my forces in the area. In the event of a contingency deployment, communications will be arriving in the theater during the critical initial period of force buildup. At that time, and during subsequent operations, effective communications systems must support me without failure.

Funding for the procurement of communications equipment has been programmed by the Army and Air Force for FY 85-89 to partially offset our infrastructure deficiencies. In addition to my theater communications infrastructure, there is a need for tactical communications support for my Deployed Field Headquarters.

In the area of security assistance, I strongly support multi-year funding of security assistance programs. Multi-year funding would allow proper host nation planning and force structure development. Given the complexity of modern weapon systems, their acquisition lead time and the required supporting logistics infrastructure, multi-year funding is no longer just a desirable objective. It is a requirement for proper planning and implementation of security assistance programs. Additionally, it

would have the highly desirable effect of enhancing host nations' perceptions of US resolve and reliability.

The type of security assistance funding provided to nations in my AOR is also critical. We do nothing to foster US interests in the region if security assistance programs create additional economic pressures on marginal economies. Even highly concessional loans are ill advised in some cases. The nations in my region with major economic problems are highly appreciative of congressional actions to provide grant security assistance. The benefits the US derives from grant aid extends beyond increased goodwill and regional stability. The likelihood of situations requiring the commitment of US forces is reduced where regional stability is maintained. Additionally, appreciation is expressed in enhanced access supporting the landing, over flight and prepositioning initiatives so critical to my mission. Should I be called upon to deploy my forces to the region, interoperability with host nation forces, which have US equipment and training, complements my capabilities and effectiveness. I would urge favorable consideration of increased levels of security assistance on a grant basis where local economic conditions mitigate against additional loans.

USCENTCOM has identified, on several occasions, the requirement for additional Special Operations forces, as well as support requirements, to fulfill USCENTCOM's special operations needs.

Although additional air assets are programmed, we solicit your continued support to ensure that these assets are delivered on schedule and additional forces are dedicated.

Soviet and surrogate forces are already using chemical agents in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia. Their experiments with means of delivering multiple agents and development of a tactical chemical warfare doctrine continues. USCENTCOM has also placed maximum emphasis on improving chemical warfare readiness. While we have made progress, our chemical weapon stockpile leaves much to be desired. It needs modernization quickly through the addition of binary chemical munitions. Although I abhor the thought of employing chemical weapons, I cannot discount the potential Soviet capability and their demonstrated willingness to use such weapons. This situation, if allowed to persist, could cause unnecessary casualties to US troops.

Despite the shortfalls I have mentioned, I believe the US Central Command has made considerable strides forward in the last fifteen months, representing a major evolution in the United States military relationship with the nations in the region. We currently serve as a credible deterrent that contributes to resolving problems before they reach the crisis stage.

In closing, I want to state that the support provided by this committee in establishing USCENTCOM was farsighted and timely.. Your efforts established a critical milestone in our common pursuit of peace and stability in this critical area, while protecting US national and regional interests. As we begin our second year as a unified command, I am pleased with our past successes and mindful of future challenges.

-END-

USCENTCOM AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



Enclosure 1

